



**U.S. Immigration  
and Customs  
Enforcement**

June 28, 2006

# News Release

## **Two Grand Rapids men sentenced for firearms, drug trafficking**

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. — Two local residents were sentenced here today to seven and 10 years in prison for their involvement in a large-scale firearms and drug trafficking organization, following an investigation by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and other federal, state and local law enforcement agencies.

Joseph Thompson, 43, of Ionia County and Anthony Zelinski, 33, a resident of Montcalm County, were sentenced today after pleading guilty before U.S. District Court Judge Paul Borman. Thompson received a 121-month prison sentence; Zelinski received 90 months in prison.

The ICE investigation was initiated in July 2005 following information that identified a residence in Grand Rapids being used by illegal aliens to store marijuana for distribution. The initial search warrant executed by ICE agents at the residence resulted in seizing the following: 65 pounds of marijuana, nine firearms, various drug processing equipment. Two illegal aliens were also arrested.

ICE expanded the investigation after finding firearm traces identifying Zelinski, a known large-scale purchaser of firearms in the area. Further search warrants resulted in seizing 38 additional firearms, cocaine, marijuana and scales destined for convicted felons. To date, 11 people have been federally charged or pleaded guilty to a variety of charges stemming from this investigation.

“ICE will aggressively investigate individuals and organizations involved with felonious activities, especially when those activities jeopardize the safety of our communities,” said Brian M. Moskowitz, special agent in charge of ICE’s Office of Investigations in Detroit. “ICE will aggressively pursue criminal convictions of those individuals, and if they are illegal aliens convicted of a felony, they will be deported and barred from entering the United States for the rest of their lives.”

A third individual Arturo Owens, also pleaded guilty. No sentencing date has been set at this time.

The investigation and prosecutions in this case continue. The case is being investigated by: ICE, Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF), Michigan State Police, Central Michigan Enforcement Team (CMET), and Montcalm and Ionia Police and Sheriff's Departments.

Assistant U.S. Attorneys Elisa Castrolugo and Daniel Mekar, Western District of Michigan, prosecuted the case.

# ICE #

*U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of four integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.*